

Edward J. Woodard, Jr.


Norfolk, Virginia 23505

The Honorable Raymond A. Jackson
United States District Court
Eastern District of Virginia
U. S. Courthouse
600 Granby Street, Room 400
Norfolk, Virginia 23510

Dear Judge Jackson:

Please let me take this opportunity to write on behalf of Troy Brandon Woodard, who regrettably and sadly stands convicted of certain crimes in your court.

Very soon now as a part of your judicial duties you will have the responsibility of sentencing Brandon Woodard, his Mothers and my only child for these offenses. I pray and trust that as you review his presentence report, that the justice which you choose to dispense, at that time, will be tempered with appropriate mercy and consideration for my Son's future and his heretofore unblemished reputation for assistance to others and record of community service.

I know in my heart of hearts that Brandon never felt he was committing any kind of Bank fraud or the like. Brandon has a long record, even as the young man that he is, as an individual who has always considered the needs of others above his own. He is a young man that has remained faithful to his faith, his family, his employers and the community he has served.

Hopefully you will have reviewed the many letters of support, submitted on Brandon's behalf, testifying to his character, integrity, commitment to family and strong faith prior to your deliberations and will see that the Brandon known by his friends, neighbors, and the community is not the Brandon that was portrayed by the prosecutors during the trial.

As the verdict was read at the end of the trial Brandon's Mother and I stood in shock, pain and disbelief that he could have been considered guilty of the things he was accused. The charges are so completely out of character for Brandon. His decisions throughout his life have never been characterized by poor choices. He has always worked hard, never maintained a sense of entitlement and has always possessed the compassion, trust, discipline, loyalty, qualities and abilities needed to affect people and their circumstances, for the better. Brandon is our life and reason for living and we pray that you will exercise leniency in his sentencing.

As you deliberate and consider the options that are available to you, in dispensing justice, I plead with you to consider the following:

- Like hundreds or even thousands of others, Brandon in an effort to supplement his commissioned income from the Mortgage Company decided, with his partners, to invest in the Real Estate Market. He, with his partners, purchased real estate with the idea of improving it and then selling it for a gain. It worked for a period of time until the Real Estate "Perfect Storm" hit. Our country entered into the worst recession in our lifetimes and the worst Real Estate Market since the Great Depression. Brandon's and his partner's real estate investments fell on hard times and they had difficulty keeping up the payments. It seemed the only solution for him at the time was to file bankruptcy.
- That is when I made several ill placed, very bad and very poor decisions, that have had a devastating, life altering effect on my son's life. Decisions, looking back that I wish I could undo, however, they represent a bell that I cannot unring and that I will spend the rest of my life and eternity regretting. I insisted that Brandon avoid bankruptcy at all costs. I even went so far as to threaten his position [to fire him] at the Mortgage Company, if he didn't keep his payments to the Bank current. In fact I demanded that he keep the loans current. I did not want my Son's loans with the Bank I had led for nearly 40 years, to go bad. I was more intent on putting the Bank's interest first, when I should have been focused on protecting my Son. I should have been more concerned and respectful of his and his Mothers interest, than my actions demonstrated or reflected.

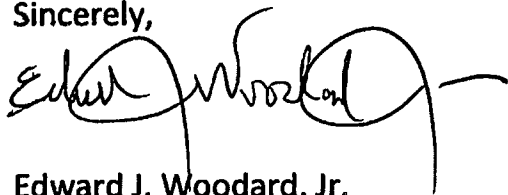
- Out of respect for his Father, being a dutiful son, Brandon tried his best to comply. I assured him that I would do everything possible to help him out of a difficult position. Even though he sent me an email to see if Menden and Hranswskyj would purchase his York Street property, the email was sent only after I had promised him that I would see if they, Menden and Hranowskyj would buy the property. It was me that came up with the idea and it was me that decided to contact Menden and Hranowskyj to see if they would invest in the proprieties, owned by Brandon and his partners. **Brandon did not originate or seek this as a solution or as an alternative.** This was purely my undertaking, under the misguided idea, that I was ultimately protecting the Bank, while assisting my son in extracting himself from these real estate transactions, that had turned sour.
- When Menden offered to give Brandon cash to help Brandon keep his loans at the Bank current, while negotiating a sale of the properties, I did not intervene, as I should have, I simply stood by and accepted his offer as a temporary solution to the problem at hand. I was wrong and my heart is broken and always will be because of this fatal error in judgment, on my part, not to step in and protect my Son, who is my life. As a Bank President, I should have known not to facilitate these payments. Brandon would never have accepted that money if I had not given him to believe that it was okay to do so. I am not proud of this decision and mistake in judgment and I have asked God to forgive me for this. Brandon never participated in any negotiations for the sale of his properties to Menden or Hranowskyj or anyone. He did not set the price, he had nothing to do with the loans that were made [he had absolutely no loan authority], and he certainly made them no promises because he had no authority to do so. His only involvement in the sales of the properties in question was to sign the sales contracts, at my direction.

- In looking back, throughout Brandon's life I have always been a demanding Father. Demanding that he do things the way I thought they should be done, many times against his will or wishes or the way he felt they should be done. It was just second nature for Brandon to follow my lead. These demands advanced, even to the extent of verbal and emotional abuse by me throughout his life, to get him to follow my directions and to do the things I wanted done, the way I wanted them done. I am not proud of my actions and I am certainly embarrassed by them to the point of being heartbroken over the position I have placed my Son, my joy and my life in. I pray daily for God's forgiveness for the life challenges I have brought to my Son.
- I offer no excuses for the poor decisions, choices, and errors in judgment or unsatisfactory behavior, as far as my Son is concerned, that I have made. I cannot change the circumstances, but I can take full responsibility for the outcome. I ask you and plead with you, to recognize that my Son was caught up in a situation, of which he had no control. It is me that should be held accountable for the decisions that were made regarding his properties and not my Son.

God knows that Brandon is innocent of the charges that have been brought against him and for which he has been convicted. His Mother and I again plead with you and pray for your mercy and grace, as you consider his lack of involvement in the things for which he has been accused and not penalize him simply because he is my Son and for the poor decisions that I have made.

I truly feel responsible for my Son's predicament. Thank you for taking these thoughts into account and for your consideration of my request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Edward J. Woodard, Jr.", with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

Edward J. Woodard, Jr.